

Nicaragua makes a mere \$710 a year. The average person in Costa Rica does a bit better, but still only makes \$4,070 a year.

Rather than handouts or loans, the United States can quickly improve the well-being of millions of our neighbors by providing the DR-CAFTA countries improved access to our vast markets. New business opportunities create new jobs, not handouts. In turn, a virtuous circle can be created as wealth and income rises along with the demands for United States products and services.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote "yes" on CAFTA. It is good for America's business.

#### HEALTH CARE ACCESS FOR LATINOS

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the Republican leadership's failure to bring up legislation that actually addresses the health care problems of American families.

Currently, 45 million Americans are uninsured. Uninsured numbers are even worse for the Latino communities which have the highest uninsured rate of any racial and ethnic group; 13 million Latinos are uninsured. That is more than one-third of the Nation's Latino population.

Latinos make up 14 percent of the U.S. population, nearly 42 million people. Yet the administration's leadership continues to ignore the significant population. This week's legislation on association health plans and medical malpractice demonstrates the Republican leadership's inability to acknowledge the devastating impact these proposals will have on my community.

These proposals will facilitate rampant fraud, raise premiums, and reduce benefits to Latino families. If the current Republican leadership really wants to reduce the number of uninsured and reduce health care costs, then it needs to bring up legislation to the floor that addresses health care problems for all American families, including the 9.1 million Latino families in the U.S.

#### CAFTA GOOD FOR WORKERS AND CONSUMERS

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, this week we will debate CAFTA. All of the Nation's major newspaper editorial boards support CAFTA. Listen to these quotes.

The Washington Post cites a study that shows U.S. income would increase by \$17 billion under CAFTA. The Wall Street Journal says CAFTA would expand the market for U.S. goods with the 44 million consumers of six Central

American countries. The Journal goes on to say that American farmers would be among the biggest winners under CAFTA.

USA Today says CAFTA would slash tariffs on agriculture products coming from the U.S. The L.A. Times says the benefits of free trade are evenly spread across society, citing rapid growth and higher income of free trading nations.

Even the New York Times claims that this free trade agreement "deserves to be approved."

In addition to these editorial boards, Central American workers and leaders overwhelmingly support this agreement. Mr. Speaker, they cannot all be wrong. I, therefore, urge my colleagues to vote in favor of CAFTA. More trade means more jobs.

#### MEDICAL MALPRACTICE RELIEF HURTS THE COUNTRY

(Mr. BERRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, we are going to be back here this week and try to convince the American people that we are trying to help them with their health care costs by passing yet again a medical malpractice insurance relief act.

The really sad thing about this is it does not help the cost of health care in this country. It does improve the bottom line considerably for the insurance companies. But the most egregious parts of this is the way it protects the irresponsible drug companies. We are going to provide tort protection. We are going to provide protection from lawsuits to Merck who knowingly put a product on the market that caused 139,000 Americans to have heart attacks unnecessarily. And they knew it would do that when they put it on the market.

We are going to provide protection to an industry that cares nothing about the health of the people. It cares nothing about anything but making a few million more dollars.

I urge this House to defeat that measure.

#### INSPIRING DISABLED VETERANS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, after returning to the United States, many disabled veterans devote themselves to their community with the same dedication they displayed on the battlefields and bases around the world. Specifically, thousands of veterans put their skills and talents to use by operating successful small businesses.

Today, I am proud to announce an event that will pay special attention and tribute to service-disabled business owners. On August 19, Mr. Bernard

Smith will host a charity golf tournament at Andrews Air Force Base to raise money for three disabled veterans groups. Twelve disabled veterans who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom have enthusiastically volunteered to participate in the golf tournament. These servicemembers are determined to lead full and successful lives and are an inspiration to all Americans.

Mr. Smith's leadership on this event is truly honorable. As a service-disabled business owner, he understands the importance of supporting those who have already given so much to our country.

In conclusion, God bless our troops; and we will never forget September 11 and the attacks on Egypt.

#### PRIVATIZING SOCIAL SECURITY

(Mr. CARDOZA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, when are Washington Republicans going to listen to the American people?

At the beginning of this year, President Bush unveiled a general plan that would lead to the privatization of Social Security. When his plan was met with a lukewarm response, President Bush decided that he would travel around the Nation for 60 days trying to sell the American people on the concept of privatizing Social Security.

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The American people listened, and they gave President Bush a resounding no. Our constituents paid into Social Security, and they want it paid back to them when they retire. Cutting Social Security benefits that Americans have earned should always be a last resort.

And yet recently there was legislation introduced by the Republicans that would divert payroll contributions from Americans to create private accounts. By taking money away from Social Security, the Republican plan would explode the deficit or force deep cuts in guaranteed benefits our Nation's citizens have already been promised.

It is time to listen to our constituents and realize Americans are not going to back Social Security privatization. Let us strengthen Social Security rather than destroy it.

#### IN SUPPORT OF FREE TRADE AND CAFTA

(Mr. HENSARLING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, this week Congress will consider the Central American Free Trade Agreement, the largest free trade agreement in over a decade. I am very proud to support this agreement that will create opportunities for the unemployed, increase wages and improve the standard of living for American workers.